
THE CREED OF A SLAVE

BY

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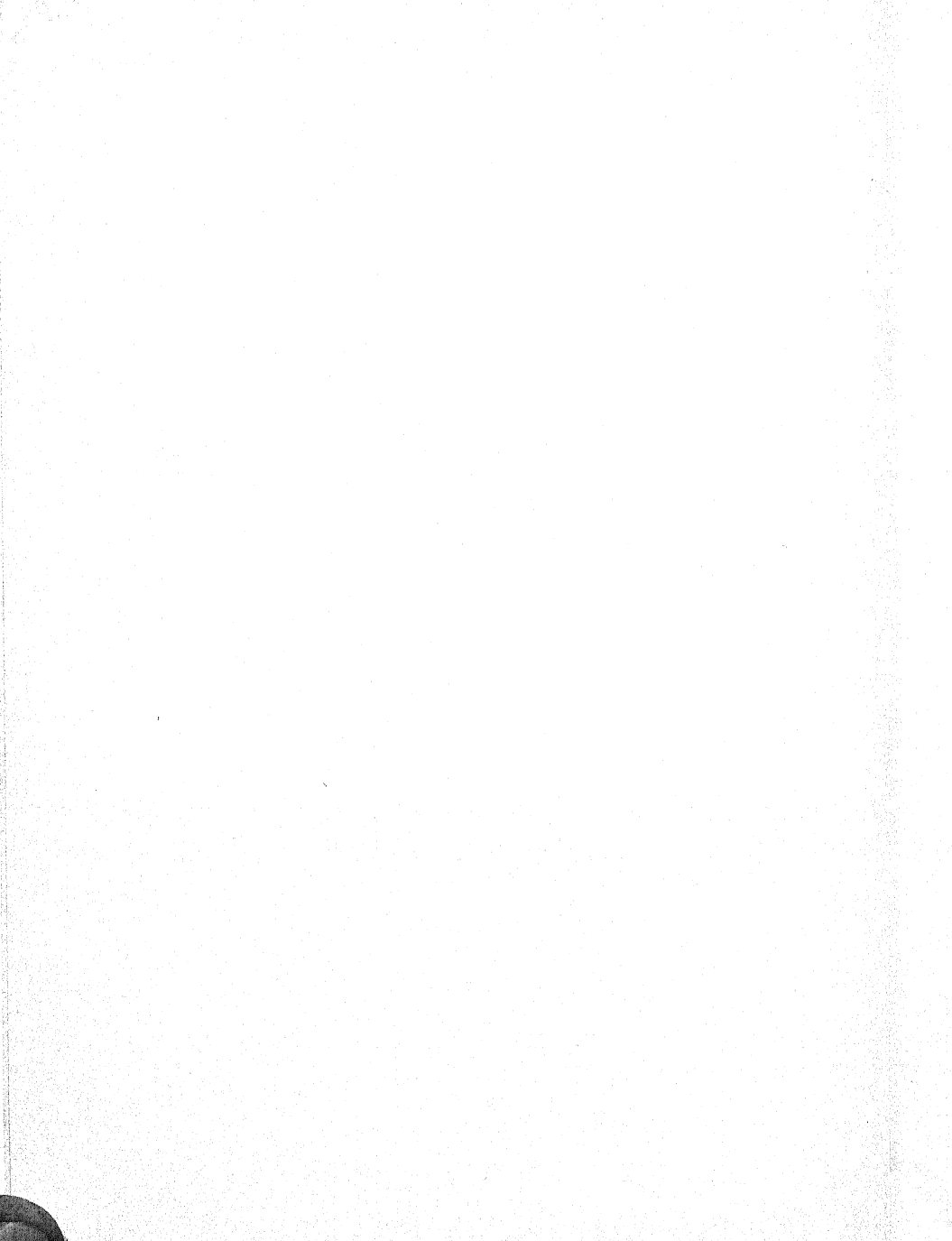
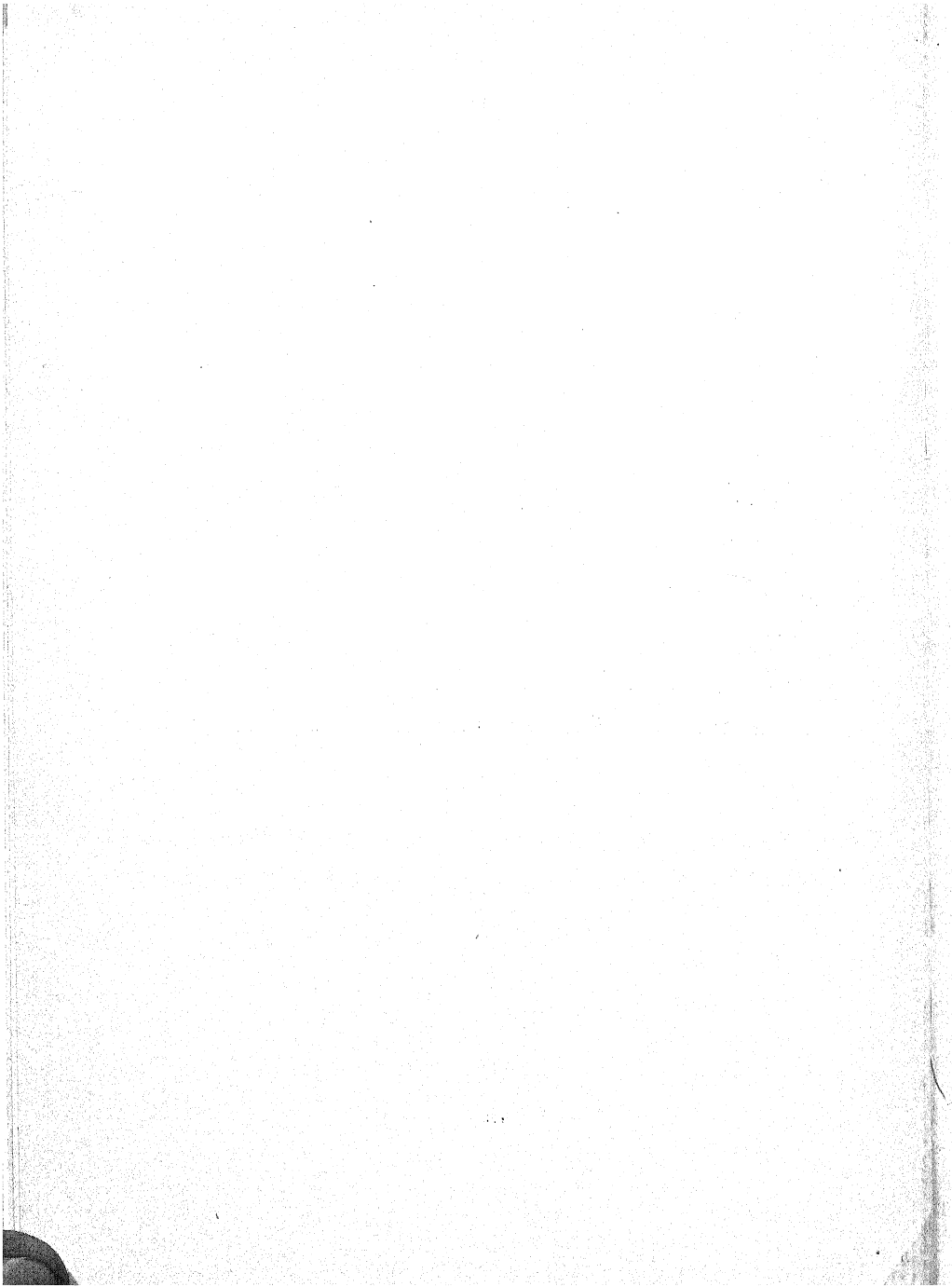


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FOREWORD

In publishing this volume of sermons the author has followed the suggestion of many friends. This is an explanation, not an apology.

Those of Welsh extraction residing in America to whom these sermons were preached, willingly recognize the power and influence of the Christian pulpit upon their lives and its incomparable contribution to their ethical and spiritual background.

Preachers pass, but preaching is perpetual. There has been a grand succession of sermons in the magnificent ministry of periodic preachers in the story of our people, and Mr. Williams is rightly regarded among us as in the line of the prophets. Throughout a varied and honored ministry he has steadfastly refused to offer from the pulpit but that which our fathers quaintly though aptly called, "the old corn of the land!" It was this food that had nourished their souls and satisfied their spiritual hunger. This is the food our brother has offered to his people as evidenced by these sermons, typical of his pulpit ministry. He shows how plain men want the simple gospel, and yet he manifests how searching that gospel is in its bearing upon our work, our amusements and our attitude toward social questions. Those who are anxious to do the right thing and to help the coming of the Kingdom, who are looking for a standard by which to test their actions and for fixed principles to apply to the ever

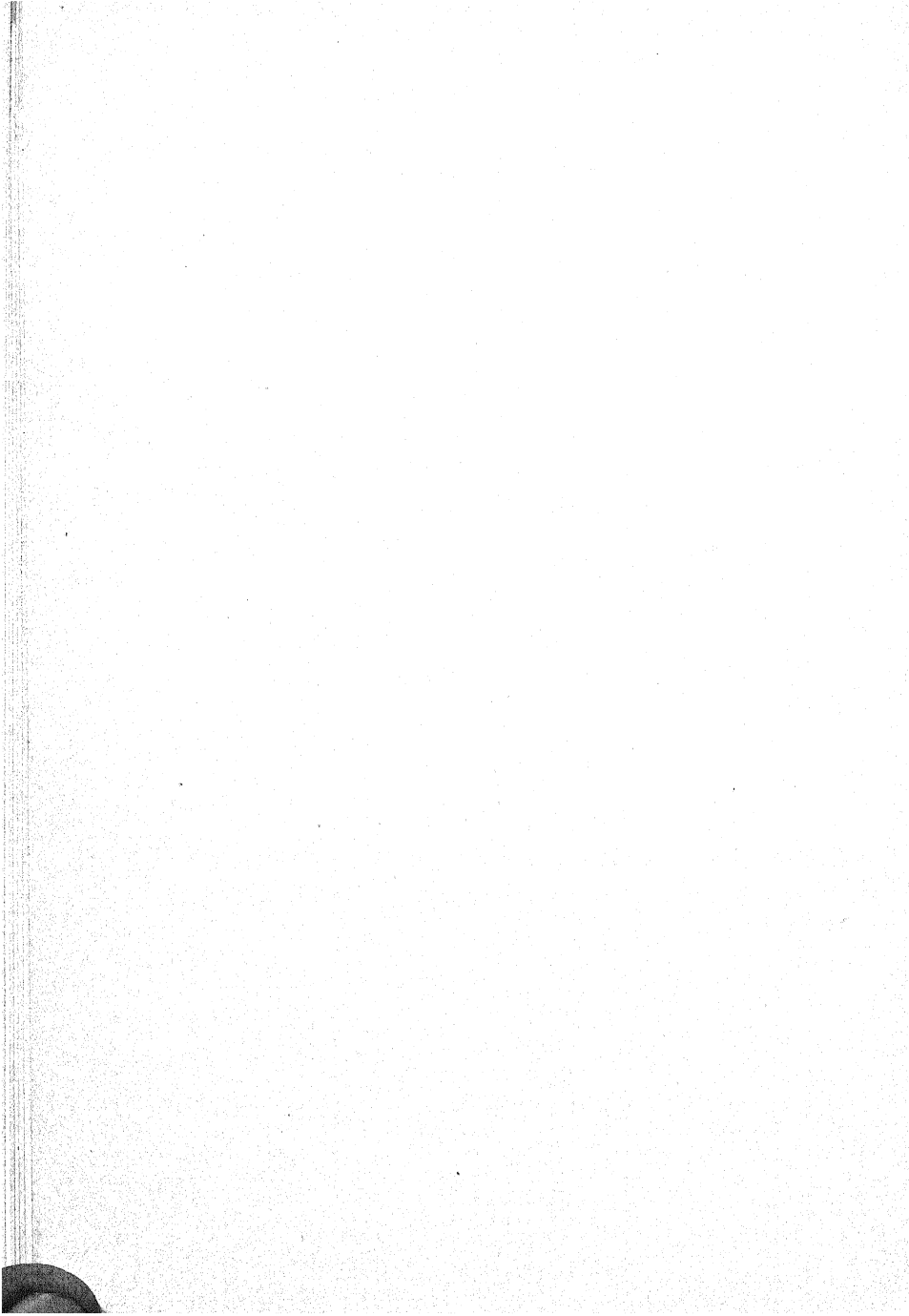
changing problems of life, will be materially helped as they read and study these gospel sermons.

Many will rejoice that the spoken word of one who was to them a real pastor and friend, has been put in this more enduring form. Of McChesney his hearers always said, "He makes God look big." A thoughtful perusal of these sermons will compel the reader to a similar conclusion, "He makes God look big."

There is no apologetic note in this preacher's sermons. He is convinced that the gospel he preaches is still "*the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe.*" He relies on no other means and methods. He believes that education is powerful, but not unto salvation; that morality is powerful, but not unto salvation; that human wisdom is powerful, but not unto salvation. We have presented in these sermons the old gospel which has wrought miracles and revealed its fruitage in redeemed and consecrated lives. May God deign to bless them to all who read them.

T. Teifon Richards.

Scranton, Pa.



THE CREED OF A SLAVE

*I love my master, *** I will not go out free.*
Exod. 21:5.

These are the words of a Hebrew slave at the beginning of the seventh year of his service, when the right was his to reclaim his freedom. The Hebrew law concerning a slave provided that after he had served his master for six years he could claim absolute liberty in the seventh year; and further, he could take his family with him, if he possessed a wife at the beginning of his serfdom.

But if his master had given him a wife from among the serfs, then it was necessary for him in the year of his emancipation to leave his wife and children in the service of his master, whose they were. Moreover, this text is the confession of such a slave. "I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out free!" These are the words of a man with two elemental passions of his soul running at cross-currents. They truly express the experience of a man at the cross roads of life. One of two great choices confront him, with the faculties of his soul yearning for both, and yet he knows right well that the choice of one means the rejection of the other.

The choice of his personal freedom—that is one, and it can be readily seen how passionately he longed for freedom. The other was the choice, on the basis of love, to abide forever in slavery with his kind mas-

ter, his wife and his children. "He was in a strait betwixt two"; on the one hand, he longed for freedom, while on the other, he desired to tarry in the service of his master and in the fellowship of his family. Hearken, however, to his words and mark how they sound the clear note of decision: "I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out free." Because of his love for his master, primarily, since he was indebted to him for his family, this slave sacrifices forever his personal liberty and he goes wilfully to the door of the old home, in the presence of the judges, to have the master bore a hole with an aul in the lobe of his ear; and, saith the story: "He shall serve him forever."

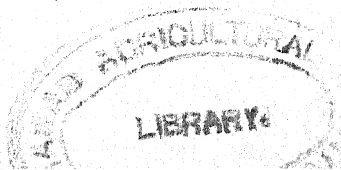
Let us now borrow this story, with a theme thrilling enough to inspire a dramatic lyric, to make it a mirror of our relationship to Jesus Christ. This slave's service and the elements therein suggest three characteristics which ought to mark our service for our Matchless Master. It is a service of love, and as such it involves the restraint, the repression, of one's own freedom; and, it is a life-long service, with a willingness to submit to the marks of the service.

1. It is a service of love. "I love my master." This is the only service which is service indeed—the service of love. When this slave began to serve his master, he labored, unquestionably, according to rule and stipulation and commandment. It was compulsory service. But as time went on, the man realized that his master took a kindly interest in him. First of all, he arranged for the serf to have a helpmeet, and gave him a little hearth of his own on the estate. Then, in the course of events, the home was brightened by

the advent of a babe. And, Oh, how happy the slave now was! Daily the master, by his kindly interest and helpfulness, won for himself the affection of his servant and his glad, free-hearted, voluntary service. No longer was the stimulus of the service outward constraint nor external compulsion. Rather, it was motivated by an inward desire and an internal impulsion.

Thus, the six years of bondage fled rapidly on the wings of time, and with the approach of the fateful seventh year—the year of emancipation—the serf discovered that unconsciously he had become inseparately united in the bonds of love to his master, so that it was now impossible for him to terminate the service. Hence, he declares with a passionate, triumphant cry: “I love my master, I will not go out free.” His service now sprang from an inward motive, which made him independent of the actions and behavior of other slaves, enabling him also to serve without counting the cost, because he found adequate compensation in the service itself.

Such ought the service of Christians to be for their Great Master, Jesus Christ. A service springing from an inward motive and not from outward compulsion. We remember the word of Paul, who delighted to call himself the prisoner and the slave of Jesus Christ. Said he to the Corinthians: “For the love of Christ constraineth us.” Some of the worldly-minded Corinthians intimated that Paul cherished an ulterior motive for his zeal and labor on Christ’s behalf, and still others said that he was beside himself—mentally unbalanced, deranged. This is always the easy way for worldly characters and nominal Christians to explain deep spirituality and sacrificial service. Wherefore,



the Apostle remonstrated with the Corinthians, saying: "You have misunderstood me. The love of Christ as an inward principle motivates and constrains me. His unspeakable love for me has created in me an undying love for Him. With John, my fellow-apostle, I can say, 'I love Him because He first loved me.' Now, to serve Him is my greatest joy."

The question, then, that confronts Christians in this day is this: Where lies our motive for serving our Matchless Master? Is it an inward motive or is the reason external to us? Do we serve Him as a matter of form and custom, so that we may be seen of men and that earthly gain and social rating may be ours? Or is the dynamic motive of love in us? That is the only motive which brings peace and poise and power to our life.

Furthermore, the service of love elevates us and makes us independent of the actions and behavior of others. In the case of this Hebrew slave, if the behavior of his fellow-serfs was culpable and blameworthy, that exerted no unfavorable influence upon him. His working creed was: "I love my master!" His service, therefore, became a loving service quite independent of what others did or did not. Thus ought Christian men always to serve their Lord and Master, on the high plane of a spiritual, love-begotten independence. If others are negligent and disobedient and faithless, what is that to them? In fact, the faithlessness of others stimulates those who truly love Jesus to a greater fidelity.

Once the Master tested the Twelve to see how the action of the crowd affected them. He had fed the five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes, and

the next day they came again for another feast. And Jesus said unto them: "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him the Father, even God, hath sealed." Now, when the disciples of the loaves discovered that Jesus would not feed them again, they turned their backs upon Him and left Him. Pathetic scene this, as the Master watched the multitude depart! Then as the shoulders of the last member of the crowd melted away on the distant horizon, suddenly Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked: "Would ye also go away?" God be praised for Peter's answer which proves that the disciples had had an experience of the reality of religion that made them immune to the behavior of the crowd. Said the impulsive Apostle: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Pure and undefiled love for the Matchless Master and His service elevates men above the infidelities of disloyalists. The only possible effect their faithlessness exerts upon genuine disciples is to make them more zealous and true.

In the service of love also there is no counting the cost, only an abandonment to the service which is in itself compensatory. This serf found satisfaction and joy in the service of his master by reason of his love for him. Love delights not itself in balances nor in a measuring rod. Love is not keen at bookkeeping. Love dwells not in the realm of mathematical accounting! No one ever heard of a mother—a true mother—presenting her son when he had reached his majority with an accurate statement of all she had suffered and done for him. No! Mothers never keep

such accounts; rather, they lose themselves in the delight of service for their children. Likewise, those who love Jesus, the Master, consider that nothing is too much for Him; no task too great to be done on His behalf; and, like Mary of old, they break the alabaster box of their lives to anoint Him without counting the cost.

2. This service, since it is the service of love, involves a voluntary restraint, a willfull limitation of one's own liberty and freedom. "I love my master," said this serf, "therefore I will not go out free." True love, in every sphere, implicates the curtailment of the lover's personal liberty. Consider the realm of marriage for a moment. At the Altar in the sacred Temple of Wedlock, the bridegroom and the bride promise before God that henceforth they will curtail their liberty and restrain their freedom, to love each other only, as man and wife, so long as they both shall live. He is to cleave to her only, and she to him alone, during their earthly pilgrimage.

Genuine love in every realm means the wilful curbing of personal freedom. Truly so in the most sacred sphere of all, the spiritual. When the Christian says: "I love my Master," he breathes also the consequent confession, "I will not go out free!" He does not now please himself; rather, he does those things which are pleasing in the sight of his divine Master. The yoke of Jesus lies squarely upon his shoulders, and "the yoke is easy and the burden is light." When temptation allures him to resort to the old selfish liberty and to cast off the chains of personal restraint—"to do his own pleasures, to seek his own desires and to say his own words"—he conquers every enticement with

the decisive, victorious confession: "I love my Master, I will not go out free!"

3. Finally, the service of love is a life-long service, with a joyful willingness to submit to its marks. This slave went gladly to the door-post, in company with the judges, to have his master bore a hole in his ear with an aul, as a seal that he was to serve his master forever. Picture the scene! The blood trickles down the serf's neck and stains his garment. Meanwhile, every drop utters the confession: "I will serve him forever!" At length, the wound healed, but the scar was ever visible, voicing the slave's devotion as it said: "I will serve him forever!"

This ear-mark of the Hebrew slave loomed luminously before Paul's mind when writing to the Galatians he declared: "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear branded in my body the stigmata—the scars—of the Lord Jesus."

Every Christian exults to carry the marks of Jesus, his Master; the marks of service and sacrifice and self-denial and suffering. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." The way of the cross ever leads home!

O! Christ, grant to my spirit,
The mark of Thine own hand,
For Thou wilt own no other,
When at Thy throne I stand."

AMEN.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE INSIGNIFICANT

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. John 1:40.

Christianity has never failed to produce its immortals. Men and women of valor and vitality have always adorned its ranks. Fire and faggot, persecution and martyrdom, have failed utterly to prevent the production of souls whose fadeless lustre will outlive the ravages of time.

The eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews narrates the undying deeds of the great heroes and heroines of faith in the Old Testament. In the album of the Acts of the Apostles, too, we see portraits of men who "hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Perusal also of modern religious literature proves conclusively that the story of the heroes of faith continues up to date. Witness such robust Christian personalities as Albert Schweitzer, Stanley Jones, Martin Niemoller and Kagawa.

However, we should never forget that among the members "of the household of God" there are those whose names never blaze forth into prominence. Heroes of the lonely way are they. Eminence and distinction, as the world evaluates such honors, are not their portion in this life. Nor do they covet honors. Shy and reticent and retiring, by nature and grace, they court no publicity. Lives lived in shadow and shade are theirs. Obscurity envelopes them in

their earthly pilgrimage. Even in death there are no glowing newspaper reports of their departure—they are too insignificant.

Should their names be ever prominently proclaimed, that is because they have the fortune of being related to a famous ancestor; and, sometimes, that is anything but pleasant, for as someone has pointedly said: "It behooves one not to boast overmuch of his family tree, because oft times it is found to be in need of spraying!"

Moreover, in the text, we read of "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." Simon Peter was the distinctive one in the family, famous throughout the ages, so that Andrew must forever be known to succeeding generations in the borrowed glamor of his brother. Too insignificant, apparently, to become famous on his own account, he is identified as "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother!"

Nevertheless, "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" it is possible for such an insignificant personality to make a contribution which is truly significant. For the encouragement of those who are distressed by a feeling of insignificance, let us consider prayerfully and gratefully certain facts gleaned from the Fourth Gospel concerning "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." None should lapse into spiritual lethargy under the spell of a sense of inferiority nor shrink from service for Christ when handicapped by certain limitations, physical or intellectual. God's estimate of service differs radically from man's. "Little is much, if God be in it. Much is nothing when God is excluded."

1. Reading the first chapter of John's gospel, we

learn this of the insignificant Andrew: "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messiah, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus." Pentecost's great preacher was led to Christ by timid and timorous Andrew. Not a bad day's work for the personal evangelist. In very deed that one act of his was sufficient to ennoble his whole lifetime of service. He condensed his evangelism into one glorious, victorious act, the bringing of his influential brother to Jesus.

The best place to begin our work of personal evangelism is with our loved ones, our kindred, who are outside of the pale of the Kingdom of God. Withal, it is the most difficult place to begin, for those nearest us know best our failings and weaknesses. But if we be honest, consistent and conscientious, our kith and kin will be most deeply influenced by our personal work and the ties of kinship will intensify our Christian appeal. Andrew began with his own brother, and the verdict of succeeding ages justify his wisdom and his zeal. God alone can estimate at its proper worth this bit of personal work by a man whose name is invariably overshadowed by the glamor of another name. Peter immediately became his brother's debtor, and the memory of the momentous day when Andrew brought him to Jesus ever lingered in the corridors of his soul.

2. Again in John 6:8-9, when the disciples were in a great dilemma, we read that "one of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said unto Jesus, 'There is a lad here, who hath five barley loaves and two small fishes. But what are they among so many?' " he queried. Albeit, no one noticed the lad save Andrew, and he was the agent, from the human standpoint,

who saved the critical situation. Through the discovery of that boy, a great miracle was executed and five thousand hungry folk were fed.

Andrew, evidently, was endowed with spiritual intuition and an unerring judgment, though lacking in other conspicuous and glittering gifts. Here again the insignificant one triumphed by bringing a lad to Jesus. And be it ever remembered that to have the grace to lead a boy or a girl to Jesus Christ, may be an epoch making act. Dwight L. Moody was thus led to the Savior by a Sunday School worker, and Edward Kimball will ever be known as the teacher and soul-winner of Moody, the well-beloved evangelist and Bible teacher. One Susannah, too, became renowned as the mother of John Wesley. If the world had more mothers like Hannah and Elizabeth and Mary and Susannah, then there would be more sons like Samuel and John the Baptist and Jesus and John Wesley!

3. Once again, in the twelfth chapter of the holy gospel by John, we find Andrew and his colleague, Philip, bringing certain Greeks to the Master, who had desired the introduction, saying: "Sir, we would see Jesus." The insignificant one again ushers in the occasion which afforded Jesus the opportunity for the utterance of one of His most soul-stirring declarations concerning His vicarious and atoning death: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

4. The last reference to Andrew in the New Testament is that in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and it is a reference by inference only, where he stands with the eleven to support Peter's preaching.

"And Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice." Andrew was there, not preaching, but just standing; standing with and for the preacher. He associated himself with the messenger and identified himself with the message. Every utterance of his illustrious brother, he approved. He exercised all the influence of his personality on behalf of the ministry on that pentecostal day.

Ah! his heart was filled with pardonable pride and joyous gratitude as he remembered the day, three years earlier, when he brought the intrepid, fearless, triumphant preacher to Jesus. "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother," enables us to thank God for the triumphs won by insignificant men and women,

AMEN!

CALVARY

Calvary is found but once in the New Testament, Luke 23:33. "And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left." The other Synoptists and John use the Aramaic name, Golgotha, corresponding to the Hebrew, Gulgoleth, meaning skull.

But Luke, realizing that Golgotha would convey little meaning to his Greek readers, used the Greek equivalent, *kranion*. And Saint Jerome in the Vulgate translated *kranion*, Calvarium. Thus through the Latin the word Calvary has come *once* into all the English versions of the Bible, prior to the Revised Version, which has the rendition, "the place which is called The Skull."

Moreover, while the word Calvary is found but once in the New Testament, the hymnologists of the church have infused the sacred word into their "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," and always with this connotation: the Redeemer's atoning, vicarious death for sinners.

"There is a *green hill* far away, Without a city
wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified, Who died to
save us all."

"When to the cross I turn mine eyes, And rest on
Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice, I must remember
Thee."

"My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of
Calvary,
Savior divine!"

"I hear Thy welcome voice, That calls me Lord
to Thee,
For cleansing in Thy precious blood, That flowed
on Calvary!"

"I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree, -
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now!"

In very truth, therefore, in the mind and heart of the evangelical church, Calvary connotes the propitiation wrought by the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world, and the word invariably is synonymous with the Cross, the Atonement!

The doctrine of the Atonement is central to Christianity. Our understanding of this essential truth influences our whole Christian thinking. It colors our conception of God and his relationship to the universe; it moulds our ideas concerning Jesus Christ, man, sin, redemption, and the ultimate meaning of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Not merely Christ, but *Christ crucified is the Christian center.*

The symbol of Christianity is not a manger, nor a river, nor a wilderness, nor an open heaven, but a cross; "the old rugged cross!"

In the Cross of Calvary, the Atonement was both accomplished and realized; and the message of the Cross is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and beseeches the world to become reconciled to God!

Let us now take three avenues of approach to the Atonement: 1. The Cause of the Atonement—God's Love. 2. That which occasioned the Atonement—man's sin. 3. The abounding efficacy of the Atonement, and the reason therefor: the Person of Jesus Christ; "Jesus Christ, the righteous—HE—HE—is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

1. We begin then at the *fountain head* and declare with the New Testament that the *immediate cause* of the Atonement is God's Infinite Love! In other words, the River of Salvation springs and flows from the boundless ocean of God's love! Earth's rivers *run to an ocean*, and therefore they fluctuate; but, the shoreless sea of eternal love is the source of man's Redemption, and hence its healing streams never, *never* fluctuate! "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," said the Christ; and, said John the Beloved Disciple, after years of meditation upon the Master's significant words:—

"God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that

He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:8-10.)

"God is love"—therefore the revelation of Himself is given in the person of His only begotten Son. "God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him!" Further, "God is love"—and therefore the revelation of Himself in His only begotten Son is *Redemptive in its purpose!* "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

The Propitiation—the Atonement—the Cross of Calvary—manifests "the breadth and length and depth and height" of the Father's love, whereby the hearts of sinners are melted to repentance.

God's love and mercy, then, are not the results of Calvary; rather, Calvary is the result—the consequence—of divine love. That is to say, the Atonement was not an afterthought with God to meet a sudden emergency! Jesus Christ is the "Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world!" (Rev. 13:8.) Sin is old, but God's love is older!

So, the Cross of Calvary is the revelation in time and on the field of history of the eternal resources of Infinite Love! In "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" the *eternal* has become *historical*! This is what Paul had in mind when to the Corinthians he said, speaking of "Christ crucified, as the Power of God and the Wisdom of God *** in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God *ordained before the world* unto our glory." And when to the Colossians he said: "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and

from generations, but now is made manifest in His saints." (Col. 1:26.)

Peter also echoes the same truth in his first epistle (1:19-20). "Ye were redeemed *** with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ, who was foreknown indeed *before the foundation of the world*, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake."

In the Atonement we behold a revelation *in time* and on the field of history of the eternal resources of God's Infinite Love! Moreover, some thinkers, influenced by forensic and legal conceptions concerning the justice and righteousness of God, in their crude attempt to explain the Atonement, have advanced unworthy ideas of God, and almost portray Him as an enemy, whom the Son finally appeases and reconciles with mankind, as though Jesus Christ were a gentle Son of an unwilling, surly Father; whereas, the clear teaching of the New Testament is that the Atonement is as deeply rooted in the Father's love as in the Son's!

Still others teach that while God reveals His Justice and Righteousness *of necessity*, the revelation of His love is a matter *of will—of choice*! Thus, His love, His mercy, is placed on a lower plane than His justice, and schism enters the Godhead! What they, who hold this position, fail to see is that Infinite Love cannot do less than its best!

The question is, could God—being what He is—do less than He did to save the World? It was impossible for the Good Samaritan, being what he was, to pass by on the other side, the unfortunate one who had fallen among thieves. Such behavior was quite possible for the priest and Levite, for though they

were socially and religiously respectable, according to the standard of their day, they were nevertheless devoid of love for their fellow man. On the contrary, the Samaritan belonged to the aristocracy of love, so that he could not act other than he did.

In like manner, it was possible for the cold, loveless Simon, the Pharisee, to limit himself to the minimum requirements of eastern hospitality; whereas, it was utterly impossible for the woman who had been forgiven much, and therefore loved much, to refrain from manifesting her love for the Savior *to the utmost!* If it be true then, that genuine human love cannot refrain from doing its best, how much more true is it that divine love could not do less than its best—less than its utmost—for a sinfull world!

Dr. Hutton in his book, "That the Ministry be not Blamed" has these telling sentences: "There is one solving word for this universe: it is God; and 'God is love!' There is one solving word for God: it is Christ." And we venture another sentence which complements Dr. Hutton's: There is one solving word for Christ: it is the Atonement! "*God, in Christ*, reconciling the world unto Himself."

2. Since God is love, why the Atonement, we are asked; and they who direct the query remind us that in the parable of the prodigal son there is no expiation nor propitiation. Suffice it to say that it is not within the province of *one parable* to teach the whole truth concerning God's Way of salvation—and God has a Way of Redemption of necessity. He never works haphazardly in any realm!

Dr. Denney in his book, "The Atonement and the Modern Mind," answers the query conclusively. "The

point in the parable of the prodigal son, says he, is *the freeness of forgiving love*. God waits to be gracious. His pardoning love rushes out to welcome the penitent. But no one who speaks of Atonement ever doubts this. The Atonement, however, is concerned with a different point; namely, *the cost of forgiveness* to God—not the spontaneity of God's love—which no one questions, but the necessity under which it lay to manifest itself in a particular way, if God was to be true to Himself and to win the hearts of sinners for the holiness which they had offended. The Atonement is not the denial that God's love is free; it is that specific manifestation of God's free love which is demanded by the condition of men."

This leads us now to say that that which occasioned the Atonement was man's sin! Some theologians, bent on speculation, have asked whether the Son of God would not have assumed our nature, even though man had not sinned? The New Testament answers explicitly that the "Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." The sole purpose of the Incarnation was Redemptive. It was man's desperate need, because of sin, that caused Christ to descend "into the lower parts of the earth." SIN OCCASIONED THE ATONEMENT!

Our English word Atonement has two meanings: The one is, satisfaction made for wrong; and the other meaning is, *at-one-ment*—the condition of being *at one* with another; that is, *reconciliation*! And in the light of the New Testament, Christ's Atonement partakes of these two meanings.

Man through sin has violated the righteousness of God, wronged His holiness and injured His love.

And therefore "God is angry with the wicked every day"—we ought not to hesitate to say this frequently to our genteel congregations! Howbeit, we must be careful not to project the connotations of human anger and wrath, and identify them with God's. "It is not held that love and anger alternate in God, or that He is at the mercy of changing moods and caprices. His holy love and anger co-exist in Him; * * the love that has no capacity for anger is imperfect on the side of holiness. Perfect love is angry and sins not." (Dr. Maldwyn Hughes on "What is the Atonement.")

There is a holy indignation in God against sin and the sinner. It is His inexorable divine reaction to sin, finally expressing itself in death to the sinner. To say that God is too good to visit sin with its due punishment, is to say practically that He condones sin, and that there "is no moral order in the world at all, and that God is indifferent to the essential distinction between right and wrong." (Dr. Denney.) But the CROSS OF CHRIST—Calvary—teaches the very opposite of this!

The Atonement then, in the sense of satisfaction for wrong, means that in His expiatory death, Christ died both *on behalf* of sinners and *in their stead*, vindicating *for them* by virtue of His complete identification with humanity, the justice and the righteousness of God and satisfying His holiness, thus securing for them "redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:14.)

"The Atonement is the forgiveness of sins mediated to us through the death of Christ." God forgives freely, but at an infinite cost to Himself and to the Son of His love!

Everywhere, the New Testament conceives Christ to be our substitute, given by God to do *for us what we could not do for ourselves*! Keeping in mind the prepositions ἀντὶ and ὑπέρ, the former meaning "instead of" and the latter partaking of two meanings, "on behalf of" and "instead of" (the context determining the exact meaning) let us look at some of the significant passages of the N. T. on the death of Christ:

We begin with Mark: "For the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." (X:45.) In Matthew 20:28 also we have the identical words: (λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.)

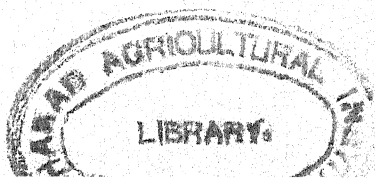
Further, in the Synoptic Gospels, we have the words of Christ at the Last Supper. Mark's record reads: "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for (ὑπέρ) many"—Matthew adds, "which is shed for many unto remission of sins." The reference here is to the sin-offering under the old economy where the victim died *in place of* the guilty.

Then there is the Johannine quotation of the Baptist's significant words:—

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," which mean, if they mean anything, the taking away of sin in its guilt and penalty by expiation!

And in the tenth chapter of the same gospel—the Good Shepherd chapter—the Beloved Disciple further quotes Jesus' words: "I am the GOOD SHEPHERD—THE GENUINE SHEPHERD—the *good shepherd* giveth His life—layeth down His life for (ὑπέρ) the sheep!"

The giving of His life vicariously for others *belonged inherently* to the mediatorial work of Jesus



Christ and *was a part of His divine commission*. Mark well His words in the eighteenth verse of that same chapter: "No man taketh my life away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. THIS COMMANDMENT HAVE I RECEIVED OF MY FATHER!"

Here follow, too, some of Paul's passages. He uses the preposition (ὑπέρ), but from the trend of his teaching, he certainly gives both meanings to the preposition: "For while we were weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.*** For God commendeth His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v:6-9.)

"Christ died for our sins." (1 Cor. xv:3.)

"Who gave Himself for our sins." (Gal. 1:4.)

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." (Gal. 3:13.) "Him that knew no sin, He (and the antecedent of this pronoun is God) made to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21.) And there is Peter's word: "Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree, that we having died unto sin might live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24.)

The accumulated meaning of these Scriptures is that Christ died on our behalf and in our stead. By one supreme act of sacrifice, He bridged the sin-caused gulf between us and God, a gulf which we never could have bridged for ourselves. If Jesus Christ did not die to bear away our sins and secure for us divine forgiveness and pardon, then the New Testament's way of speaking about His death is incomprehensible!

Moreover, in our attempt to understand the truth

of the Atonement, we know that our thought-forms and terminology are wholly inadequate. Further, we rejoice to know that men are redeemed not because they can fully explain the Atonement, but because they believe it and receive it. Nevertheless, we should not make the words of the New Testament mean less than they say, for far from meaning less than they say, these lucid, explicit words mean more than they express, inasmuch as human language at best is but an imperfect vehicle to reveal the whole content, the full concept, of divine truth.

3. The abounding efficacy of the Atonement springs from the Person of Jesus Christ. "Jesus Christ, the righteous, *is—*is—the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." He, in the deity of His person; He in His life and death and resurrection; HE is the propitiation for our sins. He "was delivered for our trespasses and was raised for our justification." Rom. 4:25.

In the New Testament we have the Christ who "was dead and is alive forever more!" One who bore our sins in death, and One, who in His resurrection from the dead, vanquished sin completely and forever. And, whosoever comes to Him by faith, and believes on His blessed name, becomes a partaker with him in victory over sin and death! Dr. Denney's words again ring true: "It is not His death as an incident in the remote past, however significant it may be; it is the Lord Himself, appealing to us in the virtue of His death, who assures us of pardon and restores our souls."

Be it ever remembered that every true Christian exemplifies the principle of the Atonement in his daily

life. With Paul he says: "I fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh." Col. 1:24. The genuine Christian demonstrates the glory of the Cross by living sacrificially and vicariously, and his life consequently is so different, so unique, that the world still "takes knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus." God make us demonstrators of the principle of the Atonement,

AMEN.

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

*Where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them,
Come and see. John 1:38-39.*

The inquisitors of the text are Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and John, the son of Zebedee, the author of this holy gospel. They previously had been the disciples of John the Baptist; but now, at the behest of their former master, they are about to pledge their allegiance to a new Master, whom they had just heard John designate as "the lamb of God." This was the Messiah, whose "shoe's latchet" the prophet said, "he was not worthy to unloose." Truly, this was he of whom John testified: "He must increase, but I must decrease!"

One day later, Andrew and the son of Zebedee stood again with their old master, when lo, the Christ passed by. And looking for the second time upon Jesus, as He walked, John exclaimed: "Behold the lamb of God!" There is He to whom henceforth you must pledge your loyalty and avow your devotion. "The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." They felt irresistibly drawn to this person of whom they had heard such marvelous testimony and for whom all the generations of their people had longed.

This, then, was their opportunity of securing first hand knowledge of the Messiah, the Christ. Therefore, silently but determinedly, they followed Jesus.

And blessed be His name, He suffers no one to follow Him in vain. So, on this day, He turned and asked Andrew and John: "What do you want?" And they, charmed by His smile; fascinated by the melodious tones of His voice and the magnetism of His personality, replied: "Where do you live?" Which being interpreted meant: "We want to become your followers; we desire to enlist as your disciples; we yearn to move from our world into your world to live with you there."

Graciously, Jesus replied: "Come and see." Enthusiastically, they went and saw where He lived, and spent the remainder of that day with Him, and it was about four o'clock in the afternoon. In very truth, they spent the remaining days of their life with Him, and sixty years later, John remembered vividly the hour of the day when he moved from his own little world—his provincial, limited, selfish domain—to make his abode in the expansive, limitless, glorious world of Jesus Christ.

Now, then, the question that concerns us is this: Where do we live? In whose world are we making our home? The answer to these questions tells exactly what kind of men we are, for the world in which we live moulds us and fashions us, leaving its clear imprint upon the quality of our character.

First, come and see the spheres where men live in a world without Christ. And, second, come and see the spheres where men live in Christ's world.

One sphere in which men live in a world without Christ is that of appetite; the realm of passion. In this realm, men are not far removed from the beasts of the field. Man is a three-storied being, built of

body, mind and spirit. Without Jesus Christ and the ennobling influence of His gospel, man's tendency, under the spell of sin, is to live in the cellar of his being, never ascending permanently to the middle floor of intellect and reason, much less to the top floor of spiritual values and holy desires and heavenly aspirations.

The cellar of one's being is a good place for the furnace and the food provisions; but man cannot live by bread alone. He cannot tarry constantly in the realm of appetite and passion without becoming very closely related to the beast of the jungle. Whereas such an one's sole motto is: "Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die"; the guiding principle of Jesus Christ and those who live in His world is, that "life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment. Therefore, take no thought—no all-absorbing thought—for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; nor yet, for the body, what ye shall put on." Not many years have elapsed since Mahatma Ghandi attended a conference in London, and he lived simply on goat's milk and was clad in homespun. By his simplicity the Hindoo rebuked the pride of this gay and giddy age for thinking solely in terms of food and drink and the changing fashions in clothing.

Another sphere where men live apart from Christ, is the realm of worldliness and materialism. In this world, men worship the hideous idols of speed and sport and splendor; they bow the knee daily to do obeisance to the gods of pleasure, possessions and worldly pomp. We should ever be mindful of this truth, that man cannot make his home in the realm of materialism without becoming materially minded;

without losing his soul. The clarion voice of the Son of Man comes to us adown the centuries saying: "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" In the loss of the soul one loses that unique spiritual equipment to appraise aright the true values of life. In Christ's world our souls are saved, and in the light of that salvation we see clearly that life transcends material values. Life cannot be gained by the possession of mere things, because they are inadequate; and further, because our tenure of them is so uncertain.

Still another world in which men live without Christ is the world of envy and malice, of hatred and suspicion. World conditions today are a sad revelation of this truth. Nations, with their backs toward the altar and their faces toward the sun of Godless ultra-nationalism abound in political terrorism and religious bigotry and racial persecution and economic tyranny.

In individual nations, such as our own, we find strife and conflict between various groups—social, industrial and political. And when we mark the personal relationships of individuals, who are outside of Christ's world, there is no end of jealousies and envyings and hatreds, with all the hideous sins of the spirit.

Would God that souls at variance were to address Jesus, the reconciler, in the words of Andrew and John: "Where do you live, O divine Redeemer? We are weary of living in our mean, sordid world; the world of distress and discord and disillusionment." Assuredly, to them would come the gladsome reply: "Come and see!"

"Come and see that I live in the realm of righteous-

ness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. I make my abode in the world of amity and concord; in the sphere of service and self-denial; in the realm of sacrifice and cross-bearing." And Christ so lives because of His constant, unbroken fellowship and communion with His Father; because His meat and drink is to do the divine will, and because the principle of vicariousness is the motivating principle of His heart.

These three are the golden keys which will unlock to us the portals of "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." May the keys be rediscovered and used by mankind in these bewildering and perplexing days,

AMEN.

THE VISION GLORIOUS!

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts. Isa. 6:5.

"THEN, said I!" This opening sentence implies that Isaiah's description of himself in the text is the result, the effect of a revolutionary experience which he had previously. Now, that transforming experience was his conversion, and here he vividly narrates the consequences of that spiritual change.

It is supremely interesting and edifying to follow the details of the conversion of every man, especially so of a young man. For, from the viewpoint of consecrated service for a whole lifetime, there is much greater significance in the conversion of a young man at the dawn of life than in the redemption of one approaching the western horizon of his earthly career. Isaiah, interestingly enough, was a young man twenty years of age—just emerging out of adolescence—when he saw the heavenly vision. And since he never forgot the vision, we find him sixty years later, an octogenarian, relating the experience which changed the whole course of his life.

He begins, "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw *also* the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple." A memor-

able date that, for this young man—"the year in which King Uzziah died!" A truly remarkable year it was; the year which marked the death of a king, and what was far more important, the year which marked *the birth of a prophet!* 'Twas a year in which God blasted the pride of Judah by the death of her king and still blessed her with hope by the birth of a prophet.

Uzziah's reign was characterized by unusual prosperity. However, little thanks was due the king for prospering, because "God helped him, and his name spread abroad even unto the entering in of Egypt, and he strengthened himself exceedingly." Yet, long before the sun of his success had approached its natural setting, it suffered an eclipse while it was at its zenith. And his chronicler again affords us the underlying cause of this eclipse. "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction." Dr. Moffatt's version of these revealing words reads: "But when he attained power, he became haughty, and that ruined him."

Pride made him insolent and arrogant—much like our contemporary contemptuous dictators—so that one day, under the spell of his haughtiness, Uzziah waxed bold and "trespassed against Jehovah, his God, by entering the temple of Jehovah to burn incense on the altar." Then Azariah, the priest, and eighty of his fellow priests, who were valiant men, withstood him, saying: "It is not thy business, Uzziah, to burn incense to God; that is the business of the priests, who have been consecrated. Go out of the sanctuary, for thou hast sinned, neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God." Then Uzziah was furious, and

while he raged at the priests, with the censer still in his hand, he was stricken with leprosy.

This tragic fate which befell Uzziah left a tremendous impression upon young Isaiah. Influenced by the king's pride, he himself, as a lad, had partaken of the prevailing arrogance and insolence. He was steeped in the spirit of his age. It is perfectly clear from Isaiah's own narrative in this chapter that he had become calloused and hard and irreverent. "But," said he, "thanks be to God for the remembrance of the transforming vision of Jehovah given me, in the year in which King Uzziah died." In that memorable year, "I saw *also*—*ALSO*—the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." The prophet is contrasting his observance of Uzziah's prosperity and its vitiating influence upon him, with the glorious appearance of God unto him and its revolutionizing spiritual effect. "When I followed the footsteps of my earthly king," muses the prophet, "I thought I was the brightest boy in Jerusalem. None in the Holy City was comparable to me. But when I saw God, the King of Kings, I changed my views concerning myself, and I cried in penitence, Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen *the King*, Jehovah of hosts!"

And so we have three sequential experiences which came to Isaiah. 1. A vision of God. 2. A vision of himself. 3. A vision of others.

1. We know certain men, who are everlastingly carping, caustic critics of others. That is always proof sufficient they have never seen God. For, to see others aright, we must see ourselves. But before we

can ever see ourselves aright, we must be blessed with a vision of God. After seeing God and our own selves, we will always see others, in the light of God's mercifulness and our unworthiness, not to criticize and condemn, but to help and uplift.

The great prophets of the Old Testament, with the apostles of the New, saw the heavenly vision and were obedient to its summons: Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah, Ezeziel, Peter and Paul. To Isaiah also came this vision glorious. Behold him a young man of twenty, present in The Temple's service on this particular Sabbath day "in the year in which King Uzziah died." This was not his first attendance; rather, he was a regular, nominal worshipper. But at this specific service, something happened; there was a crisis! He saw the majesty of God's holiness, and immediately he became conscious of the uncleanness of his own soul.

Moreover, what *he saw* was doubly impressed upon him by what *he heard*. The celestial seraphims sang, and such music he never before had heard; but now, his moral and spiritual set was tuned in to the Infinite. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty," they sang, "the whole earth is full of His glory!" Assuredly, the key to the vision is the refrain of this seraphic anthem, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty." Impressed indelibly upon the mind of young Isaiah was God's majesty and holiness, which was theoretically believed but actually denied by the inhabitants of Judah. Albeit, God laid hold of this youth and gave him the true conception of the purity and goodness of the divine nature and that men by faith can become partakers of that divine purity and goodness, meanwhile translating these virtues into holy living. The essence

of real religion is the consciousness of a relationship with God which is strong enough to control conduct. This reality became factual for Isaiah when he saw "the Lord high and lifted up, in the year that King Uzziah died."

2. When the young man saw God, that very moment he saw himself. He realized that his character and conduct were out of alignment with God's purity and goodness. His confession tells the story: "Then said I, woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips!" If a man of unclean lips, then he was also a man of an unclean heart; "for, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Despite the modern tendency to underestimate sin by calling it "the underside of good"; "the process in an upward development", and "an error of mortal mind"; yet, it is a tremendous fact, an awful reality, so real that it requires the mercy of God to blot it out in divine forgiveness. That was Isaiah's experience; he was purged and purified and cleansed and ennobled. Once again hear his confession: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth and said: 'Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.' " His sin was singed; his lips purged; his guilt blotted out.

3. All of this made him sensitive to the need of his fellow men. Said he, 'And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' Immediately he felt an inward urge to share with his fellowmen the cleansing and forgiveness and joy which he had experienced. Not only had he received preparation for service, but he

had also been made obedient and willing to serve. Out of the heavenly throne came the voice of God, asking: "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Then said Isaiah, "Here am I: *send me*—SEND ME!"

AMEN.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY TRIUMPHS

The Apostle Paul's life, as it is revealed to us in the narrative of the Book of Acts, as well as in his own letters, manifests a series of progressive triumphs. Let us mark them:

1. The triumph of his positive faith in the gospel and the absolute assurance of his divine commission as its herald.

2. The triumph of becoming the medium, by means of the gospel, in the redemption of others and in the institution of churches constituted of saved individuals.

3. The triumph over self: (a) in personal infirmities; (b) in ecclesiastical perplexities; (c) in political adversities.

4. The consummate triumph over death!

1. But the first in a series of progressive triumphs is that of Paul's positive faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and his absolute assurance of his divine commission as its herald. And this is a primary and essential element in the triumph of every missionary; he must have *implicit faith* in the gospel and an *unwavering certainty* of being divinely commissioned as its herald!

A mere casual reading of the Book of Acts and of the Pauline epistles will convince one that Paul possessed the afore-mentioned essentials. He was "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it was the power of God unto salvation," and his too was the *absolute certainty* of being "called to be an apostle, separated

unto the gospel of God." (Rom. 1:1 and 16.) Paul saw no exhaustion in the rich vein of God's grace in the gospel, upon which he was working!

His was an undying faith in the evangel, for he *knew experientially* that it contained the dynamite of God. He was not ashamed, therefore, to have the power of the gospel cope with the *militaristic might* of Rome: its swords and chariots and brawny soldiers and vicious emperor, who had placed the world under an iron yoke!

Behold this ordinary looking Jew, with no distinction as to his physical bearing, suffering from a malady of some kind—a "thorn IN THE FLESH"—he calls it! Behold him one day treading the Appian Way, directing firmly his footsteps to the Eternal City, there to challenge with the gospel, of which he was not ashamed, all the powers of darkness! Were Paul ashamed of the gospel anywhere, he would have been ashamed of it in Rome. But his was the conviction that the gospel could overturn Rome, and that the little Hill of Calvary, with its despised CROSS and CRUCIFIED SAVIOR, would outlive the Palatine and the Capitoline hills with their temples and palaces of the Cæsars!

And this leads us to say that the three essentials of the content of the gospel to this triumphant Missionary were: (a) Christ incarnated; (b) Christ crucified; (c) Christ risen! *Christianity* to him was a *factual religion*!

There was no doubt in the mind of St. Paul concerning the DEITY of Jesus Christ and His appearing in the flesh! Harken to his words: "And without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness, God

was made manifest in the flesh." "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men."

This essential note of triumph concerning the Person of Jesus Christ is sounded, with Paul, by a modern missionary statesman, Dr. Robert E. Speer. In his book, "The Deity of Christ", Robert Speer says:

"I believe, first of all, he writes, in the *deity* of our Lord Jesus Christ because of his character; for it seems to me, in the great language of Horace Bushnell, that 'the character of Jesus forbids his possible classification with men.'

"Christ was such a man that he could not have been a mere man. He was a man so great, so perfect, that he must have been more than just a man. Now we can put the matter in a very summary fashion at this point.

"If our Lord was only a man, if his character was merely human, then Bowdoin, Yale, Bryn Mawr and Vassar ought to be turning out better men and women than he was. If our Lord was only a man, it is strange that the nineteenth century cannot produce a better one.

"He was born in an obscure and contemptible province. He grew up in no cultured and refined community. He was the child of a poor peasant's home, of a subject race.

"Yet he rises sheer above mankind, the one commanding moral character of humanity. Now, if Jesus was all that, just as a mere man, the world should long ago have advanced beyond him."

Verily, the world has not advanced beyond Him, and never will!

Further, Paul makes the cross, with the abounding efficacy of the Atonement, central to the gospel: that in Christ and His Cross, God was "reconciling the world unto Himself, and now beseeches the world to be reconciled to God!" Buttressing and completing His work on the Cross, the risen Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, saves and sanctifies sinners, changing them "into His own image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

All of this spiritual boon comes by grace, through faith, not of man himself; it is the gift of God, lest any should boast. Thus, the Apostle victoriously strikes a death blow to man's pride and vanity and conceit!

And in reading the witness of another triumphant present-day missionary, Dr. E. Stanley Jones, one finds him in his "Christ of Every Road" AT ONE with Paul. Hear him; he is speaking specifically of Pentecost:

"Another thing that differentiates Pentecost sharply from modern tendencies is that whatever happened there seems not to have come from within man, but from without. Pentecost presented resources from without to man; it was not merely a quickening and developing of resources from within.

"Some superficial modern religious teachers say: the roots are always in us. We are born from within, not from without. That puts the finger on the crux of our modern religious problem. The modern cults of self-culture tend either toward the emphasis on the divinity of man, so that he is to be awakened to grasp

the truth of his oneness with the divine, or to discover that man has latent resources that make him self-sufficient. In either case, he is born from within and not from above! All of this, with the modern emphasis within Christianity upon *immanence*, makes a very definite tendency—is it toward fullness or futurity? *** The New Testament does teach a very close union of the human and the divine; so close that Life flows into life; Mind into mind; Purpose into purpose; Being into being! The union seems to be as close as that of the fingers and the hand: the fingers, while retaining their individuality, are nevertheless rooted in the palm and draw their sustenance from it.

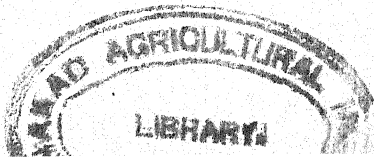
“While this is true, the New Testament cannot fairly be quoted on the side of modern cults. Man is to be born from above; the power is from ‘*on high*’, and the Holy Spirit is to come ‘*upon us*’ not from ‘*within us*.’ It is distinctly understood that it is a gift *fresh* and *new* and not something that already belongs to us. It is true that the fact that we can receive the Spirit shows how deeply akin to the Spirit we are. Nevertheless, the attitude of the New Testament is that we are suppliants, not self-sufficient. This is a *terrific blow to modern pride*! And just because it is a blow to modern pride, it impresses me with its truth. Can a deep God consciousness arise out of or be superimposed on self-sufficient conceits? The essence of the Divine is humility, and the first step in finding God is to strike a blow at our pride—a mortal blow, so that we shall be so humbled in the dust in order that we can be raised to the highest heaven; so stricken that we can sing; so self-surrendered that we can be self-assertive. The cults and teachings that begin with

self-culture and self-assertion, or assertions about the divinity of self, end in futility—a vast lifting of one-self by one's boot-straps!" That assuredly has the Pauline flavor of the triumph of a positive faith in the gospel of God's grace. This gospel Paul felt constrained to proclaim! Necessity was laid upon him; yea, woe was his if he preached not this gospel. (1 Cor. 9:16.)

This *one thing*—THIS ONE THING—he did and triumphed! This ONE THING we missionaries of the Cross in America must also do, if we would triumph! Again I quote from Stanley Jones' volume: "‘This ONE THING I do, said Paul! Whereas these *forty things we dabble in!*’ We tolerate everything in our lives, hence we must tolerate our own spiritual paralysis. Paul was a river; we are swamps! A river has banks; a swamp none! It spreads over everything; hence, it is a swamp. Some of us are moral and spiritual swamps; we are so broad and liberal that we take in everything from the shady to the sacred!"

2. Then, there is Paul's additional triumph in that he became the medium, by means of the gospel, in the redemption of others and in the institution of churches constituted of saved individuals.

Oh, the triumph of being soul-winners for Jesus Christ! Judging from St. Paul's zeal, his motto was: "He that winneth souls is wise!" In his day, as in ours alas, in the sight of the world, those men are considered wise who accumulate great wealth, and secure worldly honor and political distinction! But Paul, *the chief of sinners*, having been saved with an everlasting salvation, dedicated his life to the glorious task of saving others. And in this aspect, his was



truly a triumphant life! Mark the roll-call of some of his converts: Luke, Lydia, the Damsel with the spirit of divination, the Philippian Jailer, the runaway slave Onesimus, Timothy, Titus, Priscilla and Aquila, Dionysius, the Areopagite, Damaris, Stephanas, the first fruits of Achaia! And that remarkable register of saved men and women—named so affectionately—in the sixteenth chapter of Romans, always interests me, the majority of whom undoubtedly were the Apostle's converts. They were "his epistles, written in his heart, known and read of all men!" And they became the nuclei of the churches established by Paul during his fruitful missionary journeys. Truly, the great Apostle exemplifies the triumph of the missionary in becoming the medium, by means of the gospel *preached and lived* (especially lived) in the redemption of others!

"Will there be any stars in our crown (Stars of triumph in redeemed souls)

When at evening the sun goeth down;

When we meet with the blest, in that haven of rest,

Will there be any stars in our crown?"

3. Furthermore, St. Paul triumphed over self, in personal infirmities; in ecclesiastical perplexities; in political adversities.

He informed the Corinthians: "So I fight—and he means the good fight of faith—not as one that beateth the air, but I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection." Which words Moffatt renders realistically: "I do not plant my blows upon the empty air—

no, I maul and master my body." The meaning of the Greek verb ὑποπιάζω in this verse is, "*to strike beneath the eye.*" Thus picturesquely, Paul speaks of his self-discipline and self-mastery—lest after preaching to others, he himself should be a cast-away! Hear him as he writes to the Philippians: "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry; both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me!"

His triumph over that *mysterious thorn in his flesh*, is a classic of grace! He besought thrice that it might depart from him, and we can well imagine how intensely the Apostle prayed and sought for relief. Yet again, he brought his whole being under spiritual self-mastery and was convinced that Christ's grace to endure was sufficient for him. He knew right well that it were far better for him to suffer the thorn with the power of endurance of God's grace than to be rid of the thorn at the cost of being bereft of divine grace!

In ecclesiastical perplexities, too, with "patience he possessed his soul!" Harassed now by carnal Gentile converts, and then by formal Judaizers, he evidences the spirit of triumph. When some of the worldly-minded Corinthians intimated that there was some ulterior motive to Paul's zeal and labor of love for Christ; and, when still others were bold to assert that he was "beside himself" then the Apostle, in complete self-mastery replied: "No, beloved, you have all misunderstood me: it is 'the love of Christ that *constraineth* me!'"

Then triumphantly replying to the Galatian Juda-

izers, he cried: "From hence-forth let no man trouble me, for I bear branded in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus!"

Moreover, his triumph in political adversities: his arrest at Jerusalem; his imprisonment at Cesarea; his first and second imprisonment at Rome, is indicated clearly by that very meaningful word of his spoken to the Centurion and the Master of the ship and the sailors when they were ship-wrecked by that furious Mediterranean tempest:

"But after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said. 'Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship; FOR THERE STOOD BY ME THIS NIGHT THE ANGEL OF THE GOD I BELONG TO AND SERVE; saying, FEAR NOT, PAUL, THOU MUST BE BROUGHT BEFORE CAESAR: AND LO, GOD HATH GIVEN THEE ALL THEM THAT SAIL WITH THEE!' This Missionary knew no defeat! Nay, he became 'more than a conqueror through Christ that loved him!'"

4. And this is gloriously manifested by *his consummate triumph over death!* This scarred old Warrior of the Cross, each scar the mark—the stigmata—of the Lord Jesus, laid down his armor in VICTORY, knowing right well that soon his Lord would place the diadem of *Eternal Life* upon his brow! I will now let him speak for himself:

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire *to depart and to be with Christ, WHICH IS FAR BETTER!*

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my

course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing!

"For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written (Isa. 25:8), Death is swallowed up in Victory.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

"But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

AMEN.

JESUS SINGS

A Communion Meditation

And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Matt. 26:30.

One cannot but believe that our Savior delighted to sing, though the Evangelists record but one instance when He sang, on that memorable night in the Upper Room—the night before His crucifixion.

The argument from silence is never a conclusive one. Jesus, unquestionably, united with his disciples oft-times in singing the songs of Zion. However, His melodious, triumphant singing in the Upper Room on that never-to-be-forgotten night, made upon their memory an indelible impression.

Yes, Jesus exulted to sing the Lord's song. His mother, Mary, taught him as a child many of "the psalms and spiritual songs" of the Old Testament, and as occasion required He sang them, "making melody in His heart to the Father." The songs of birds, the melody of nature and the symphony of the spheres charmed and soothed Him. Moreover, that which arrests one's mind and causes wonderment, is the fact that Jesus sang as He was about to die. Before facing the agony of Gethsemane and the suffering of Calvary, He sang! "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." Thus, "the great Shepherd of the sheep" laid down His life for us sing-

ing; hence, His vicarious death becomes for us a theme of song and praise.

The specific hymn which Jesus and His disciples sang on that night is found in Psalms 115 to 118. The Jews began their service of the Passover by singing Psalms 113 and 114. At the close of that impressive and meaningful service, they united in singing Psalms 115 to 118. These particular Psalms were called Halel, from the opening word in Psalm 113, "Halelu-yah," Praise ye the Lord!

In these Psalms we find definite references to the redemption of Israel from Egypt and from Babylon, and they speak prophetically also of the suffering of the Messiah. The words as they fall in song from the lips of Jesus are peculiarly significant. How meaningful the strains descriptive of Him! List to them:

(a) "The dead praise not the Lord; but we will bless the Lord from this time forth and forever more. Praise ye the Lord."

(b) The second stanza speaks of Jehovah's anointed "being compassed by the sorrows of death and the pains of Sheol getting hold upon him, as he found trouble and sorrow." These words portray the actual experience of the Savior in His passion! But Oh! how His notes ring triumphant and sonorous as He continues singing: "Because Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears and my feet from falling, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living."

(c) Then follow the strains of the last stanza: "The Lord is on my side, I will not fear. What can man do unto me? I called upon the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me and set me in a large place.

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." How His melodious voice must have increased its crescendo as He reached the Psalm's climax: "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. *** Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God and I will praise Thee; Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee!"

Ah! That is the song our Savior sang before sweating the blood-drops in Gethsemane; before wearing the crown of thorns and suffering His hands and feet to be nailed to the cruel cross. Oh! wonderful singing by the world's Redeemer. He created a theme-song for all them that love Him and put their trust in Him: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, AMEN."

OUR GOSPEL

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance. 1 Thess. 1:5.

In the seventeenth chapter of the Book of Acts we have the record of Paul's visit to Thessalonica in the course of his second missionary tour. At that time he succeeded in securing a nucleus of a Christian church in that commercial and populous city. The wanderlust of the gospel had returned to the Apostle, and he, with his new companion Silas, left Antioch to revisit the churches which he had instituted during his first missionary journey.

First, they called at Derbe. Thence they set out to Lystra, where they found a young disciple, Timothy, whom Paul took with him. From Lystra, the missionary band wended their way to Iconium, continuing their journey to Phrygia and Galatia. They fully intended advancing to Bithynia, in northeastern Asia Minor, but were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to go into Bithynia. The Holy Spirit both guides and impedes the children of God. Consequently, Paul and his colleagues turned westward, and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas, on the shore of the Hellespont. There a vision appeared to Paul at night. A man from Macedonia stood before him, and prayed him, saying: "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

We may rest assured that Paul's sleep vanished for

the remainder of that night and that he arose early the next morning to visit the docks there to inquire for a vessel crossing the Hellespont. It is an interesting fact that the heroes of the two great classic poems of Greece and Rome, the *Odyssey* of Homer and the *Æneid* of Virgil, had both embarked from Troas; but the momentous voyages of Ulysses and Æneas are not worthy to be compared with the adventurous missionary enterprise of Paul and his associates, Silas and Timothy and Luke, the physician.

On landing in Europe, they pushed forward to Philippi, and through their ministry in that city, three souls were saved—the first fruits of the Apostle's missionary harvest garnered in Europe. Lydia, the seller of purple, was the first; the damsel with the spirit of divination and the Phillippian jailer. Eternity alone will reveal how many were redeemed through their instrumentality.

Upon their release from the prison at Phillipi, the missionaries after bidding farewell to the brethren in Lydia's house, went to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews, and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them out of the scriptures, asserting that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead and that this Jesus is the Messiah. Some of the Jews believed in Christ, and many of the devout Greeks also and several of the chief women. These constituted the church in Thessalonica. The group met in the home of one Jason, and Paul labored among the Thessalonian believers for three months, until he was driven out of the city by the unbelieving Jews. But the Apostle's labor there was not in vain, for the

members of that church became "examples to all that believed in Macedonia and Achaia." They sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, "but also in every place their faith toward God was spread abroad."

While Paul later ministered in Corinth, he sent Timothy to visit the brethren in Thessalonica. Upon his return he gave the Apostle a glowing report of the zeal, the fidelity and the enthusiasm of the Thessalonian converts for the gospel, though they suffered sore persecution. Thereupon, Paul wrote them this letter of encouragement, praising them for their "work of faith, their labor of love, and their patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ." One reason Paul adduces for their unfailing loyalty is the fact that the gospel was energized by the Holy Spirit in its proclamation at Thessalonica the first time. Said he, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance." And thus potently he emphasizes the human and the divine aspects of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. Its human aspect is manifested in that it is a gospel *in word* as the medium of its revelation, and a gospel *by men* as the agents of its proclamation.

2. Its divine aspect is manifested in that its proclamation is energized by the Holy Spirit, making it a gospel *in power* and *in much assurance*.

1. The gospel is good news in human speech as the medium of its revelation. A word is the means for the transfer of thought from one person to another; it is the link that makes intelligible the content of one mind to another mind. Words are the lamps which illumine the highways of thought in the com-

munion of men with each other. And the gospel of peace must needs be an evangel in word—good news conveyed in the language of the earth—in order to make its message intelligible to mankind. That was one of the basic purposes of the incarnation of Christ. In addition to embodying the mind of God in the life of Jesus, it was essential also to express the love of God in earth's vernacular.

John, the beloved disciple, designated Jesus as the Logos, the Word. He appropriated a term well known in the theology and the philosophy of his day, and applied it to Jesus Christ. In consequence, the word logos was transfigured and filled with new meaning, for it taught that Jesus Christ was THE WORD between God, the speaker, and man, the hearer. Wonder of the ages, this! "God made manifest in the flesh." The Word pitched his tent among men; made his abode in the temple of human flesh and expressed God's thoughts in human speech. Old words received new meaning when they transmitted the message of God's love.

The gospel has enriched and glorified every language it has touched. Today, thanks be to God and the Bible Society, there is scarcely a tongue or a dialect in the whole round world into which the gospel has not come. It is found in earth's vernacular in everyone's Bible, bringing a revelation of eternal truth to man's mind and imparting eternal life to man's heart.

"Sing—preach—they over again to me, Wonderful words of life,
Let me more of their beauty see, Wonderful words of life;

Words of life and beauty, Teach me faith and
duty,
Wonderful words, beautiful words; Wonderful
words of life."

Further, this evangel is a gospel *by men* as the agents of its proclamation. Said the Apostle, "For *our gospel*—OUR GOSPEL—came not unto you in word only." Paul's gospel! Silas' gospel! Timothy's gospel! And our gospel too, if we have "experienced its effectual working in us, as it is in truth the word of God." Man is the recipient of the gospel, and he, too, is honored of God as the herald in its proclamation. Now, it is evident, that the gospel as it is lived and preached by men, bears the color of the preacher's character and personality. This caused friction and schism in the church at Corinth. Because of their carnal minds, the Corinthians grouped themselves into factions; one clique favored Paul, the other Cephas and the other Apollos. Even today, this danger confronts us; the peril of permitting the personality of the preacher to conceal the glory and the energy of the gospel. Yet, by the very nature of things, the personality of the preacher is intertwined with the gospel he proclaims. Human powers and talents and character and personal charm are identified with and united to the proclamation of the words of life by every preacher. Therefore, speaking humanly, Paul was right when he said, "*our gospel*!" It was and is a gospel according to Matthew and Mark and Luke and John! Yes, and be it remembered that every professing Christian proclaims the gospel, in his own characteristic way every day. Men receive their impression

of Jesus from our interpretation of Him in our character and conduct. From the way we preach the gospel and live the evangel, do men receive their conception of its potency and glory. John R. Mott asks the question in these pointed words: "Is the Christianity of which you are an exponent worth propagating?" God grant that OUR GOSPEL—THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO US—may do justice to Jesus, to the end that men who know Him not may be wooed to Him as they see Him reflected in our life.

2. Just as truly has this gospel its divine aspect, and this is its holiest of all: its proclamation with the dynamic of the Holy Spirit, *in power and in much assurance*. In its origin, the gospel is divine. "THE WAY OF SALVATION" was constructed according to the plans and specifications of God. Redemption by grace through the gospel "bears the image of the heavenly." The idea never would have dawned upon man's mind apart from divine revelation. The gospel is one of "the deep things of God"; the "things prepared by God"; the "things freely given to us of God", which "eye never could have seen, nor ear heard, nor could these things have entered into the heart of man," apart from God's unveiling of them unto him by his Spirit.

Moreover, the text has reference to the divine potency and the saving efficacy of the gospel when preached "in demonstration of the Spirit and power," and proclaimed "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God." The Holy Spirit energized the preaching of the gospel so that the Thesalonians experienced its saving power and its blessed assurance. They did not simply enjoy the gospel as a treat, but were glad to submit to its treatment.

The dynamic of the evangel is still experienced in the region of the mind and the will; in the realm of the heart and the conscience. It enlightens the mind; it inspires the affections; it purifies the conscience; it sanctifies the whole of man's spirit. The divine gospel stirs up and moves to agitation the *dead sea* of men's souls by the "powers of the world to come!" Thus, "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

"Brands are plucked out of the fire" by the gospel in power, and "fire is plucked out of the brands" by the gospel in much assurance. By this process of divine grace, men are made "free from sin and are made servants unto God." God be praised for the gospel "not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance!" 'Tis not at all strange that Fanny Crosby, possessing the assurance, could sing:

"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,
O! what a foretaste of glory divine;
Heir of salvation, purchased of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long."

AMEN.

NEW TESTAMENT STATISTICS

For where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them. Matt. 18:20.

The number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty. Acts 1:15.

The same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Acts 2:41.

After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number. Rev. 7:9.

The first three verses of the text suggest the idea of New Testament statistics, while the passage from the Book of Revelation directs our thought to that estate in the life of the church which defies the powers of the most efficient statistician. When, at length, the Militant Church becomes the Church Triumphant, it will be constituted of a "great multitude which no man can number."

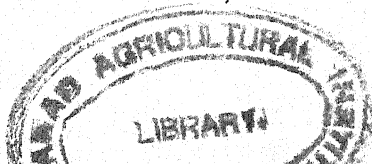
Albeit, effort is exerted here below in ecclesiastical spheres to number the church; to secure, as accurately as possible, a report of her condition—statistically. And yet, it should be borne in mind always, that sheer statistics conceal about as much as they reveal; because, there are in the life of every church certain things which are too mystical, too divine, to be counted and enumerated.

To illustrate, behold that poor widow of whom Jesus speaks, who cast into the treasury two mites, in contrast with the rich, who cast in much. A statistical record of that giving would reflect quite unfavorably upon the poor widow, as it bestowed, rather, all the glory upon the rich contributors. Statistics could do nothing more than record the sums given, and two mites would be as mere two drops in a vast reservoir! But Jesus said something about the poor widow and her two mites which a statistical record could never reveal. Hear Him:

"And He called unto Him his disciples and saith unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, that this widow has cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; for they did cast in *of their abundance*, but she of her want *did cast in all that she had*, even all her life.'" The cold type of statistics could never say that, which is equivalent to saying that statistics conceal as much as they reveal.

Nor is a large church membership always an indicator of a deep spirituality and consecration in that church. Should we have chanced to see the directory of the church at Sardis in Asia Minor in the first century, we would scarcely have learned from it "of the few names, even in Sardis, who had not defiled their garments, and who walked with Jesus in white, because they were worthy." Statistics, oftentimes, conceal more than they reveal. There is, therefore, in the New Testament no elaborate statistical record of the Early Church. However, we find in the text a few figures concerning that church which are suggestive and very heartening.

1. The record of the church of Christ, at the be-



ginning, is very simple. There was no room at all for boasting. It began with two or three. "For where two or three are gathered together *in my name* there am I in the midst of them." These words charm one's soul! They contain so much of comfort and encouragement to the members of small churches. In the context, Jesus Christ emphasizes the power and the authority inherent in the church in its most limited sphere. He tells the twelve disciples, that by reason of their union with Him and their unity in Him, they possess authority to mete out spiritual discipline. And more, Jesus informs the Twelve that theirs is the peculiar power, buttressed by Heaven's authority, to bind the things that are loose upon the earth and to loosen the things that are bound. Furthermore, continues the Master, "You have the distinctive spiritual prerogative to agree as touching upon a certain thing which you shall ask for of my Father who is in heaven, and it shall be done for you." "For where two or three are gathered together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them." The specific New Testament meaning of the ecclesia is this: Two or three assembled in the name—in the loving, vicarious, self-abnegating spirit of Jesus, with the Christ himself in the midst. Such a group is essentially a church. Without these distinctive characteristics, though the number be large and the edifice elegant and the service ornate, there can be no church. In very truth, the church of Jesus Christ during the first century was sheltered in the homes of the believers, since in their deep poverty, they were unable to build temples for worship. Yet, those simple hearths of the early Christians were transformed into veritable sanctuaries of the living God,

because that in them were assembled men and women in the name of the Lord Jesus, whilst He himself was in their midst to bless. In reality, therefore, there cannot be a small church. Every one, with Jesus in the midst, is a great church. Too often we are obsessed with a worldly sense of bigness and identify it with greatness.

How much of comfort then, and inspiration, we find in these words for our smaller churches, which lack an impressive membership and are without magnificent edifices and an elegant ritual. The spiritual influence of a church, be it large or small, with Jesus Christ in the midst, permeates quietly, yet effectively, the life of society, and will eventually leaven the whole lump.

2. Then as we turn our new Testaments to the Acts of the Apostles, we discover another statistical record concerning the church between the Ascension of Jesus and Pentecost: "The number of names together (in the Jerusalem Upper Room) were about an hundred and twenty." Here is a definite increase; and yet, the smallness of the number, at first thought, saddens us, as we remember that the earthly ministry of the Master is now ended. In consequence of His three years' ministry, He saw only an hundred and twenty as "the travail of His soul."

After winnowing the Traitor and all the faithless ones, Jesus' spiritual harvest was measured by only an hundred and twenty! They were the choice souls who abode with Him through all His trials. Let us ask then: Was the ministry of Jesus a failure? No; a thousand times, no! There is a greater victory in apparent defeat with Christ, on a high, spiritual plane, than in seeming triumph with the world, on a low,

mean, materialistic level. In the discipline of the spiritual life in Christ Jesus, there is a severe testing. He came to send fire on the earth!

And perchance to us, as tragically it has come true to Christians in other lands, there will come the test, whether or not with the minority, we will cling to Jesus Christ, and to Him alone! Once, when He trod the dusty roads of Palestine, "many went back and walked no more with Him." In such an extremity then; and, wherever and whenever it may still occur, Jesus asks the faithful who abide, "Will ye also go away?" And ever will He be answered by the faithful who cleave: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." The true church will uphold forever this essential creed and will proclaim this essential message, till "time shall be no more."

3. Furthermore, we find in the second chapter of the Acts an interesting statistical fact concerning this early Christian church numbering an hundred and twenty, *after the day of Pentecost*. And that record causes one's heart to leap with joy. "The same day there was added unto them about three thousand souls!"

The one hundred and twenty continued with on accord in prayer and supplication, awaiting the promise of the Father. United in spiritual concord and in heavenly harmony, the promise was gloriously fulfilled for them. They received the Holy Spirit; His fire and fervor; His light and power! Into the sea of iniquitous men they thrust the net of the gospel, which that day was filled with three thousand repentant, re-

deemed souls, and though "they were so many, yet was not the net broken." To their hearts' experience came conviction, contrition, conversion, consecration!

This selfsame net is the divine asset of the Christian church today and when she accepts anew the enlightenment and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, submitting whole-heartedly to His conditions and paying the price in absolute submission to God's will, again there "will be added to her such as should be saved."

4. And it affords us exceeding great joy to say that the statistics of the New Testament attain unto a triumphant climax in the Apocalypse. Two or three; one hundred and twenty; three thousand; and then "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues!"

The membership of the Church Triumphant staggers the mind of the keenest and mightiest statistician. Mark well, too, that this great multitude "came out of great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." What a glorious, victorious consummation for the Church Militant!

"Hark, how the adoring hosts above
With songs surround the throne,
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their hearts are ONE.

From every kindred, every tongue,
Thou brought'st Thy chosen race,
And distant lands and isles have shared
The riches of Thy grace.

To Him who sits upon the throne,
The God whom we adore;
And to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be glory evermore, Amen!

THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE SANCTUARY

How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. Psalm 81:4.

It is evident that the writer of this Psalm was a member of the Levitical family of the sons of Korah, whose office it was to be the door-keepers in the house of God; for, he voices this testimony in the tenth verse: "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

By reason of some untoward circumstance he was hindered from participation in the worship of the sanctuary. And he longed to be as one of the sparrows or the swallows that nestled in some nook of the sacred courts. With soul-stirring words he expresses the longing of his devout spirit for the worship of "the courts of the Lord": "How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." The Psalmist knew by experience the loveliness of the attractions of the sanctuary, and having been deprived for a season of the sanctuary's attractions, his "soul longed and even fainted" for a renewed experience of them.

And the intention of this message is to emphasize the need of the sanctuary and its attractions in the complex conditions of our modern life. Today, we find an increase in all manner of worldly enticements

and allurements which not only compete with, but actually militate against the attractions of the sanctuary. There is also a crass materialism abroad, arising from a misconception of modern scientific discoveries and human progress, which intimates that the sanctuary, with all of its religious significance and its spiritual values, is quite obsolete, having no vital place in this enlightened modern age! 'Tis true that the past fifty years have seen marvelous strides in human progress, enabling man to harness the dynamic resources of nature. Meanwhile, this new knowledge and scientific control of the forces of nature has increased humanity's self-reliance and self-sufficiency, and has enhanced the tendency for man to cherish the idea of independence of God and erroneously to feel that religion is superfluous and the church unnecessary.

But we submit that humanity's new found power through modern scientific discoveries, far from making God and the sanctuary unnecessary, on the contrary has made God and religion and the sanctuary more of a necessity than ever! Someone recently courageously suggested that we declare "a moratorium on inventions until our morality catches up with our intelligence."

Truly, humanity conscious of the natural forces it controls, needs to have that material power at its command, mastered and governed by a counter-balancing spiritual power. Our late President, Theodore Roosevelt, expressed this truth potently when he said: "To educate a man in mind and not in morals, is to educate a menace to society." It is a fallacy, therefore, to say that modern progress has made God and the sanctuary unnecessary; rather, it has made them more necessary to mankind than ever. In its basic needs caused by

sin and sorrow and suffering and death, humanity is the same today as it ever was, and continues, when true to its innermost promptings, to thirst after God. Never was there a time when mankind required the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ more than the present. Never before has human society stood in so great a need of the edifying and purifying streams of influence which flow from the temple of God. The sanctuary, therefore, is a necessity of life today, and its attractions alone can satisfy man's deepest yearning.

1. The Sanctuary, and the synonymous terms, the Tabernacle, the Temple, the House of God, the Church, are wholly scriptural. The command of God to Moses, his servant, was:

"Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering." Then the offering is named, gold and silver and brass and purple and scarlet and fine linen. "And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them," saith Jehovah. It is important to note that in the building of the sanctuary, God required an offering of his people; the offering, too, was to be of their best; and, most important of all, the offering was to be given with a willing heart.

Of necessity, then, according to the cumulative testimony of the Bible, the infallible text-book of faith and conduct, the sanctuary holds an important place in one's religion. Very early in his history, man dedicated consecrated places to represent God and to symbolize his divine presence. Paradoxical though it may seem, he localized God. Because man is finite and limited; and, more, because he is sinful, the transcendent

God is too far to attain unto Him; and the immanent God is so great that man cannot comprehend Him. Man needs a physical, tangible contact with God. Think of water; it is ubiquitous: in the air; in the trees; in the earth; in our bodies. It is everywhere! Yet, when we are thirsty and need water, we don't go everywhere for it; rather, we go somewhere, to a fountain or to a faucet. In like manner, unless we learn to worship God somewhere, and thus find Him, we will never worship Him anytime nor anywhere.

This truth was strikingly expressed by a soldier in spiritual distress, to his chaplain in the world war. Said he, "Padre, I'm not needing to find God everywhere. I need to find Him somewhere; can't you understand?" Now, this need to find God in a specific place is met and satisfied by the church, the sanctuary, whose sole business is to bring men together to the place where they might meet with God in Christ. A church that does not measure up to this high privilege, is not a church, it's a club! Jehovah's most precious promise to Israel was the promise to meet them in the sanctuary, "on the mercy seat," which typified Jesus Christ, "the mediator between God and man." A meeting place with God is a necessity to a finite, imperfect, sinful creature, and this meeting place for us is the church of Jesus Christ.

Moreover, there is always in man the tendency to go to one or the other of two extremes. The one is, to limit religion exclusively to the sanctuary, and to regard everything beyond the realm of the sacred as common and profane and secular. The other extreme is to blot out altogether the difference between the sacred and the secular; between the consecrated and

the common; and thus, to eradicate the difference between the temporal and the eternal; between the material and the spiritual; between the things that shake and "things which cannot be shaken." True it is, that the spirit of religion is to permeate the whole of life, as the yeast leavens the whole lump. Nevertheless, it is equally true that religion, to thrive, must have its own sphere and environment; it demands its own peculiar holy place, the sanctuary; it must have its own holy day, the Sabbath; it requires the nurture of its own book, the Bible. History and experience prove that when an individual disregards the sanctuary, desecrates the Lord's day and denies to his soul the nourishment of the food of God's Word, such an one's religion is ephemeral, for it soon withers and fades and dies. Every spiritually robust character exults in saying, "How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!"

2. Most assuredly, the sanctuary has its attractions to every spiritually-minded man. The primary attraction is God Himself. "We have been made for Him," as Saint Augustine has so quaintly said, "and we are forever restless until we find rest in Him." Says the Psalmist, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple." We have been born to know God and to enjoy His fellowship, and it were better that we had not been born than that we should live without knowing and loving Him. Our souls will continue in a state of unrest until we find contentment in God.

Further, there is the attraction of the fellowship of

the believers. Oh, the joy that springs from spiritual communion with kindred spirits. Instinctively, they recognize each other. The Word declares that "the Lord knoweth them that are His," and the Lord's people know each other also, and no power on earth can keep them apart. The Christian life is not a detached, isolated life, it is, rather, a communal, spiritual society. And there is refreshment and encouragement and empowerment in fellowship. When met together with fellow-believers, the Christian's love is quickened, his faith confirmed and his strength renewed.

"Blest be *the tie* that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Still another attraction of the sanctuary is the inspiration there received, through religion expressed and through the anointing from the Holy One, for men themselves to become veritable sanctuaries; personal temples of the living God. Thrice to the Corinthians, Paul stresses this truth: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you?" And again, "Ye are the temple of the living God." Peter, too, calls the saints "a spiritual house, an *holy priesthood*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Ah! The saints, who know by experience the attractions of the sanctuary, are they who themselves become the temples of the living God.

AMEN.

